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INFO RUCNDSC/DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9701
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RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 0025
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 0207
RUEHBN/AMCONSUL MELBOURNE 6894
RUEHPT/AMCONSUL PERTH 5158
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY 5165
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
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RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2042
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/12/2035
TAGS: MCAP PARM PREL TSPA AS
SUBJECT: AUSTRALIA WATCHING CHINA'S IMPENDING INTERCEPT
FLIGHT TEST

REF: SECSTATE 2126

Classified By: Political-Economic Advisor Edgard Kagan, Reasons 1.4(B)(D).

¶1. (S/NF) Summary: Australia is watching developments around China's pending intercept test closely and appreciates reftel message as part of the very close coordination with the United States. Deputy National Security Advisor Angus Campbell told us PM Kevin Rudd is concerned and following the issue closely. The GOA's diplomatic response will be carefully calibrated around the actual events of the test.
End Summary

¶2. (S/NF) Polmil and econoffs passed points in reftel to Cameron Archer, Director of the Defence and Strategic Policy section at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on January 11. U.S. Defense Attaché Col. Britschgi and Office and Regional Affairs also passed them to Defence Signals Directorate Director Ian McKenzie, who is acting in Deputy Secretary of Defence for Intelligence and Security Steve Merchant's place this week while Merchant is on leave. According to Archer, DFAT and the Australian intelligence community have been closely monitoring the developments at Chinese flight centers. Archer said that the GOA's diplomatic response to a flight test would depend on the actual events - a direct ascent anti-satellite test would be of extreme concern, but an Anti-Ballistic Missile test conducted within Chinese airspace would mean that Australia's approach to China would likely focus more on transparency and advance notice for ABM tests.

¶3. (S/NF) Separately, the Pol/Econ Counselor briefed Acting National Security Advisor Angus Campbell on U.S. views regarding the impending launch and subsequent diplomatic strategy. Campbell thanked us for the information and said that the Prime Minister was watching the situation closely. Like the U.S., Campbell said, Australia would need to base its response on the nature of the actual event. Campbell said National Security Advisor Duncan Lewis was back from

holiday leave and would be available for any additional coordination at any time.

¶4. (S/NF) McKenzie echoed to DAO Australia's concern over keeping a close eye on developments, and agreed to pass the information in reftel to colleagues in the intelligence community.

¶5. (U) Post will follow-up with appropriate officials in the Australian foreign affairs and defense communities as appropriate.

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